

## Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CAB-02 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00

      DOTE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 CIEP-01 FAA-00 L-03 SY-05

      SCCT-01 /037 W

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R 140945Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY DACCA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1338

AMCONSUL KARACHI

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EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAIR, ETRD, BG

SUBJ: BANGLADESH BIMAN: AIRCRAFT LEASING, ROUTE STRUCTURE, AND  
      TERRORISM ALERT

REF: A. STATE 145168 B. STATE 145425 C. KARACHI 2858

      D. DACCA O R 071000Z

1. EMBOFF SPOKE JULY 8 WITH RASHID AHMED, COMMERCIAL MANAGER OF  
BANGLADESH BIMAN (BB) REGARDING REFTELS AND BB'S PLANS FOR THE  
IMMEDIATE FUTURE.

2. TERRORISM ALERT. EMBOFF BROUGHT THE INFORMATION INDICATING  
THAT THERE MAY BE TERRORIST ACTIVITY ASSOCIATED WITH THE MONTREAL  
OLYMPICS (REFTEL A) TO AHMED'S ATTENTION. HE PROMISED TO NOTIFY  
THE APPROPRIATE OFFICERS OF HIS FIRM.

3. AIRCRAFT LEASING (REFTEL B). AHMED SAID THAT BIMAN HAS IN THE  
RECENT PAST A LEASING ARRANGEMENT WITH PAN AYER FOR A BOEING 707-  
139B. THIS LEASE WAS ARRANGE BY FORMER DCMLA, AIR VICE MARSHAL  
TAWAB (SEE PARA 6 BELOW). THIS LEASE EXISTED FROM APRIL TO  
MAY OF THIS YEAR. TWO OTHER LEASES ARE ANTICIPATED IN THE  
NEAR FUTURE FROM THE AIR TRUST OF SINGAPORE. ONE IS FOR A CV880 TO BE  
OPERATED BETWEEN SINGAPORE AND CHITTAGONG, APPARENTLY TO FERRY CREWS  
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FROM THE OIL EXPLORATION RIGS IN THE CHITTAGONG AREA. THE SECOND

LEASE IS APPARENTLY STILL IN THE FORMATIVE STAGE. IT WILL BE OF THREE MONTHS DURATION AND COVER A ROUTE FROM SINGAPORE TO BANGKOK TO DACCA TO SINGAPORE ON A TWICE WEEKLY SCHEDULE. THIS WOULD BE THE INAUGURATION OF A NEW ROUTE. BB ALSO LEASES PLANES DURING EACH PILGRIMAGE (HAJJ) SEASON TO FLY FROM DACCA TO JIDDAH. FINALLY BB LEASES FOUR BELL HELICOPTERS FOR USE BY SEVERAL OF THE FOREIGN OIL EXPLORATION FIRMS HERE.

4. PROPOSED ROUTE EXPANSION (REFTEL C AND REFTEL D). ON JULY 7, BB COMMENCED A ONCE A WEEK SERVICE WITH KARACHI. IT ALSO OPERATES FLIGHTS TO AND FROM LONDON, VIA DUBAI; BANGKOK; KATHMANDU, AND CALCUTTA. PLANS ARE UNDER WAY TO EXPAND SERVICE THIS YEAR TO SINGAPORE, BOMBAY AND ADU DHABI. NEWSPAPER ACCOUNTS, E.G. JUNE 17, 1976 BANGLADESH TIMES, REPORT THE CONCLUSION OF A QTE AIR SERVICE ACCORD UNQTE WITH NORTH KOREAN NATIONAL AIRLINES OFFICIALS AND NOT THE PRESENT INTENTIONS OF BB WHICH WISHES TO BASE ITS PLANS ON QTE COMMERCIAL UNQTE GROUNDS.

5. BB IS CURRENTLY SEARCHING FOR TWO USED BOEING 707'S TO ADD TO ITS FLEET. ONE IT WISHES TO PUT INTO SERVICE IMMEDIATELY (I.E. AUGUST) AND THE OTHER LATER (DECEMBER). THESE PLANS APPEAR TO BE REQUIRED IN RELATION TO THE PLANNED SCHEDULE EXPANSION. BB NOW HAS THE CASH FOREIGN EXCHANGE TO PURCHASE THE FIRST PLANE, BUT MAY REQUIRE FINANCING FOR THE SECOND.

6. THE PAN AYER AIRPLANE LEASE (SEE PARA 3 ABOVE) IS THE LEASE ARRANGED BY FORMER DCMLA TAWAB. IT WAS FOR A 707-139B WHICH WAS TO REPLACE THE REGULAR BB 707 WHICH HAS BEEN DISABLED. THIS LEASE WAS PREPARATORY TO THE PURCHASE OF ONE OF THREE 707'S AVAILABLE FROM PAN AYER. THE 707-139B WAS ONE OF THESE PLANES. THE OTHER TWO WERE NEVER INSPECTED. TAWAB APPARENTLY MADE ARRANGEMENTS TO PURCHASE THE 707-13 GB FOR \$2.5 MILLION. BB OFFICIALS WANTED A MORE UP TO DATE MODEL AND WISHED TO PAY UP TO \$5 MILLION. (COMMENT: ALTHOUGH NOTHING EXPLICIT WAS SAID, EMBOFF WAS GIVEN THE IMPRESSION THAT AHMED FELT TAWAB HAS PERSONAL INTERESTS IN THE PARTICULAR SALE.) PRIOR TO TAWAB'S RESIGNATION, 40 PERCENT OF THE COSTS OF THE 707-139B HAD BEEN FORWARDED TO PAN AYER. AT THE END OF THE LEASE PERIOD THE 707-139B WAS RETURNED TO PAN AYER FOR MAINTENANCE. IT WAS IN THEIR LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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HANDS WHEN TAWAB RESIGNED. PAN AYER REFUSED TO RETURN THE PLANE UNTIL THE REMAINING 60 PERCENT OF ITS PRICE WAS PAID. BB'S POSITION WAS THAT THE AGREEMENT TO PURCHASE WAS TAWAB'S AND NOT THEIR. PAN AYER HAS SUBSEQUENTLY RETURNED BB'S MONEY LESS A LEASING CHARGE.  
BOSTER

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## Message Attributes

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